



Finding inspiration involves actively engaging with your surroundings, breaking routines, and capturing fleeting ideas immediately.

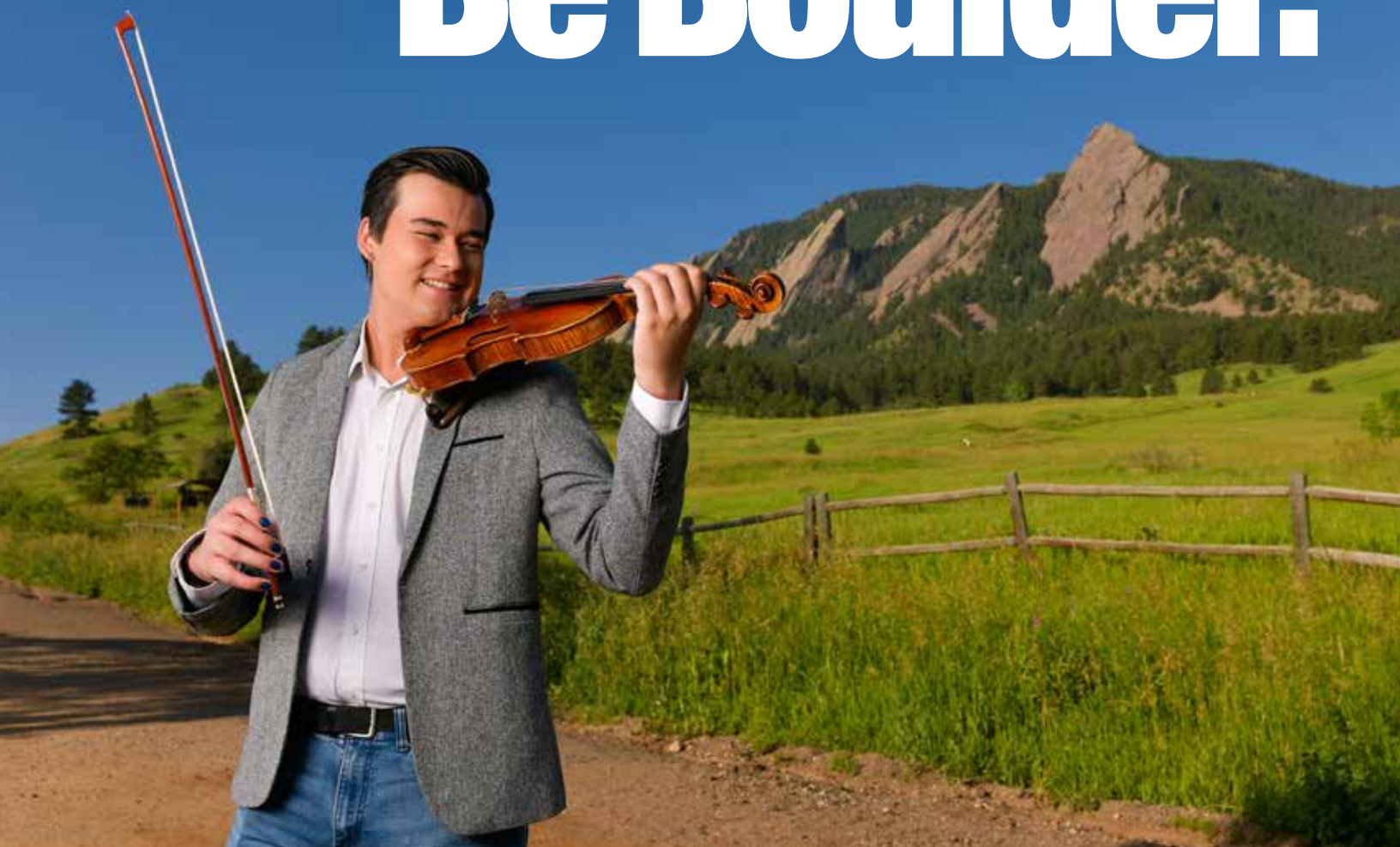
Colorado Music Educator

Spring 2026

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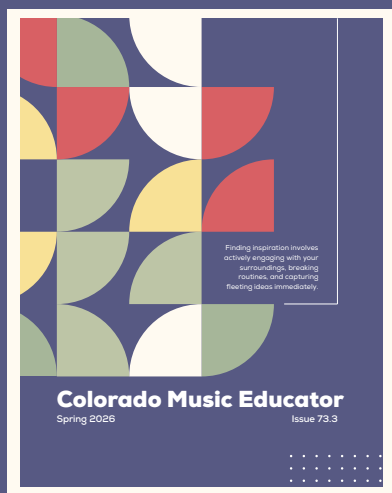
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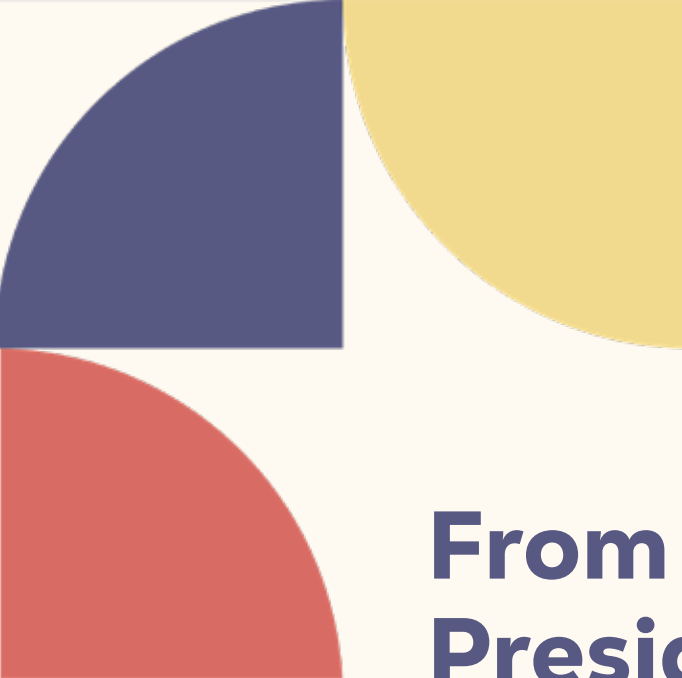
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From the President



Leila Heil
CMEA President



Hello, Everyone!

I would like to begin with a sincere thank you to our outgoing CMEA President, Casey Cropp, and our Immediate Past President, Cynthia Eversole. In the true spirit of service and leadership, Casey and Cynthia have dedicated countless hours to our organization, upheld a strong commitment to excellence, and shown genuine care for our music education community. We have all benefited from their efforts to sustain and expand the mission of CMEA. Thank you, Casey! Thank you, Cynthia!

As we approach the summer months and reflect on our efforts and accomplishments over the past school year, many of us are also beginning to consider ideas and plans for the year ahead. In this time of both reflection and forward think-

ing, I have found myself considering the sources of my inspiration and what continues to guide my work.

The word inspiration can be traced back to the Latin term *inspirare*, meaning “to breathe into” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). This literal definition aligns closely with its more figurative meaning—a kind of intellectual and creative “breathing in” that energizes our thinking, strengthens our enthusiasm, and sparks innovation. As artists, music educators are deeply connected to these moments of inspiration—experiences and ideas that ignite our passions and lead to fresh, creative approaches in our work.

I encourage each of us to take some time this summer to reflect on the question, “How and where do I find inspiration?” In today’s age of instant information and quick-answer



technology, I posed this question in a simple online search and received the following response.

Finding inspiration involves actively engaging with your surroundings, breaking routines, and capturing fleeting ideas immediately. Effective methods include changing your scenery, exploring art/books/music, capturing new ideas, and conversing with others. Prioritize rest, playfulness, and documenting thoughts to reduce mental clutter.

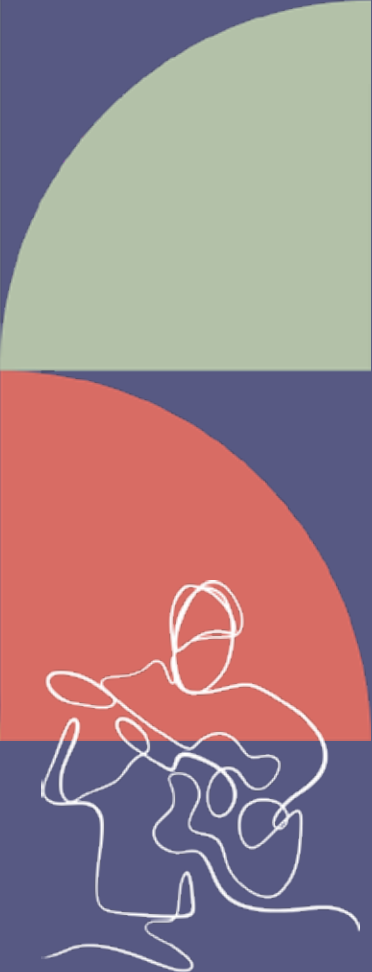
As we walk alongside our students in their journeys of discovery and growth, let's also remember to create space for our own exploration, personal growth, and nurturing of our artistry. My search suggested that artists often find inspiration in the natu-

ral world and their surroundings, in everyday experiences, and through learning from the ideas and contributions of colleagues and fellow artists. Inspiration can also emerge through engagement in the creative process itself, by embracing interdisciplinary exploration, and by seeking meaningful outlets for self-expression—those that connect us to a sense of purpose, joy, and renewed energy.

I find inspiration in you! Thank you for that all you do for your students, your school communities, and our shared profession.

Wishing you all the best as you close out another productive year!

Leila Heil
CMEA President



Casey Cropp
CMEA Past President

From the Past President

Happy April to the Colorado Music Education family!

Since January, I've been eager to thank everyone who attended the CMEA Conference. Congratulations to our clinicians and ensemble directors, and heartfelt thanks to the CMEA leadership team—especially Cynthia Eversole as she concludes her six-year term on the Executive Council. The conference offered an outstanding lineup of clinics and concerts, with so many valuable options that members faced tough choices—a great problem to have. Several individuals were also able to enjoy the opportunity for dancing with great music at the Salsa Night, including the General Manager of the Broadmoor, Ann Alba (pictured below). Thanks to Leila Heil in arranging that new event!! We are also grateful to Ray Cramer for sharing his expertise with us.

As we approach the busy end of the school year—final festivals, pops concerts, awards performances, graduation, and planning for summer and fall—I encourage you to pause and recognize those who support your work. Whether it's a custodian, colleague, administrator, parent, or friend, their encouragement matters. A handwritten note, email, coffee, or public acknowledgment can go a long way.

As the year winds down, please also consider nominating someone for the CMEA Hall of Fame or the Honored Administrator Award. More details will follow but now is a great time to reflect on those who champion music education.

As always, **FINISH STRONG!**
Casey





Instrumental Council News



Chuck Stephen
Instrumental Music
Council Chair

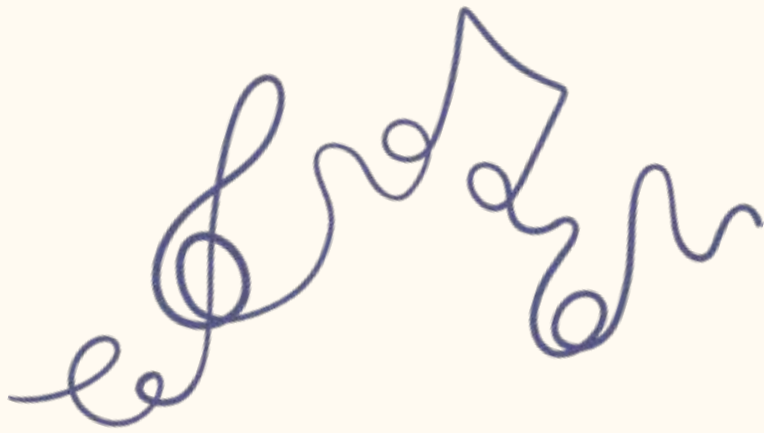
Hello Instrumental Music Educators of Colorado.

I hope everyone has had a great second semester! Spring festivals are in full swing, All State events have, or are about to take place, and we are preparing to celebrate the graduating class of 2026. Thank you to everyone who attended the Clinic/Conference last January! It was a pleasure to see a record number of teachers sharing in the friendship, inspiration, and rejuvenation that the conference provides. If you were unable to attend this year, I hope that you are planning to join us next year, January 27-30, 2027.

Congratulations to all of the honor performing ensembles this year. It was inspiring to experience the culmination of the hard work and preparation that the students and directors put into their performances. I encourage every CMEA member to consider submitting an audition to perform at the 2027 clinic/conference. I am often amazed at

how many incredible ensembles we have in Colorado but directors don't apply because they might think they aren't good enough. Remember you are doing amazing work with your students, and each of us have something unique and valuable to share with colleagues around the state. It is our hope to see representation from groups of all types and sizes from around the state but we need everyone's participation to make that happen. Please consider applying and encourage your colleagues in your district to do the same. We can't have representation without participation! There is so much benefit to your program just by going through the process of preparing your ensemble to create an audition for CMEA.

In addition to considering an application to perform at CMEA, I would encourage you to also consider presenting a clinic or encouraging a colleague to present. Most of the clinics presented at the conference are by Colorado music educators! There is so much expertise across



all of our districts, and our community grows stronger when we share our experiences with one another.

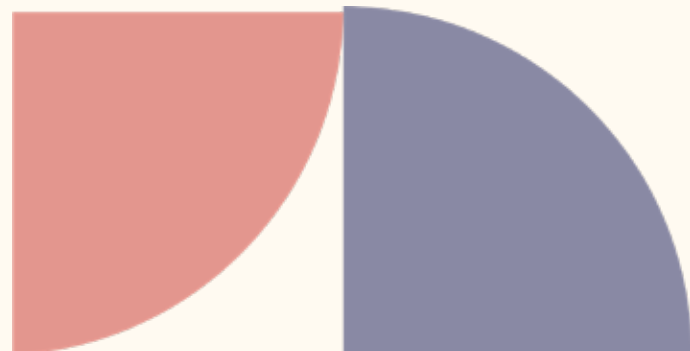
With summer break quickly approaching, it's time to make plans for the activities that re-energize our minds and bodies. For some of us, it's taking time to travel, attend an outdoor concert, spend time with friends or spend time in nature. For others, it's attending summer workshops and conventions. In addition to the fantastic summer conventions put on by state organizations like CO-ASTA, ASBDA and CBA, many of our local universities are offering summer programs as well. There are numerous opportunities for our students as well. Summer camps, leadership workshops, and summer lessons can all keep students engaged and motivated throughout the summer months.

I hope everyone has a wonderful, restful summer and are re-energized for school to start again in the Fall. I look

forward to seeing all of you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Chuck Stephen
Instrumental Music Council Chair





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Paul Maley
General Music
Council Chair

General Music Council News

Happy springtime everyone!

I hope this message finds you all well and not in a frantic, thousand concerts left, spring time frenzy mode. As we approach state testing time, we are also entering registration for summer workshop time! There are some incredibly wonderful opportunities out there for all of you. Please check out our partner organizations below and their exciting upcoming professional development offerings. It is important for us to always be refining our craft, but these events are also a ton of fun too!

Rocky Mountain Chapter of AOSA
May Chapter Share
<https://www.rockymountainorff.org/>

Colorado Kodály Institute Summer Program
www.online.colostate.edu/degrees/kodaly/

Music Will Modern Band Summit
2026

<https://musicwill.org/modern-band-summit/>

American Eurhythmics Society
Summer Dalcroze Trainings
<https://www.americaneurhythmics.org/all-events/>

Performance / Session Submissions are almost upon us! This is a great time to start thinking about sharing your knowledge and teaching with your colleagues. Everyone has something unique to share, a performance group that will inspire a room full of teachers, and a session that will change a teacher's approach forever. I would like to encourage you all to find what makes you a great teacher and submit.

As for performance submissions, CMEA's GMC council would like to make sure everyone knows we are looking for any and all styles of student performers. If you have an inspiring and great sounding group,



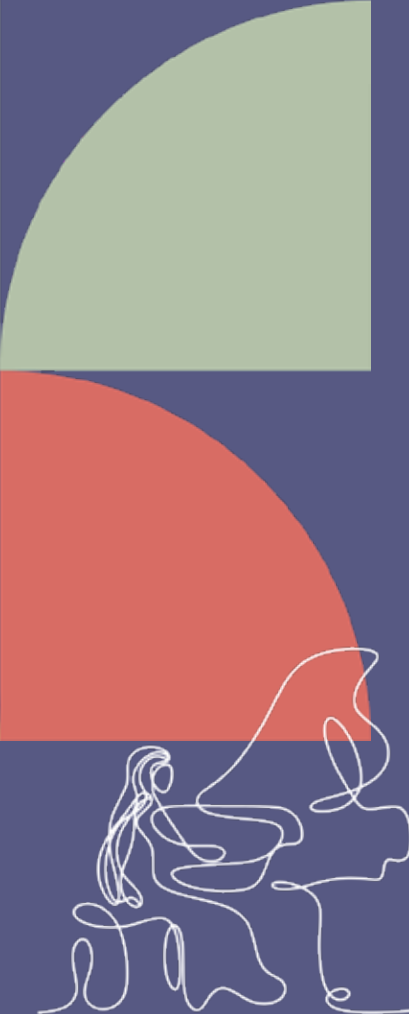
of groups we would like to see, but not limited to are choir, percussion ensemble, ukulele ensemble, musical theater production, modern band groups, and any other ensemble of kids playing great music that you would like to share.

I hope you all have a wonderful finish to your school year. You are important, you are appreciated, and you are seen doing great things for the musical youth! Please take care of yourself and remember that only the best you can be the best teacher-you!

Take care,
Paul Maley

Paul Maley
GMC Chair
www.paulmaley.com





Bryan Kettlewell
Vocal Music Council Chair

Vocal Music Council News

Hello Music Educators, my name is Bryan Kettlewell, and I am the proud chair of the vocal music council. I want to take this opportunity to thank the team of people who helped make the 2026 conference a great success. Starting with the chair elect, Daryl Gingrich, to everyone on the vocal music council, everyone stepped up and helped take care of all the details from big to small. I think the vocal part of this year's CMEA Conference was one of the smoothest yet.

A few updates on things we are looking to improve for the conference next year. First of all, I know some of our sessions were packed to the brim, even overflowing this year. We were super excited to see so much interest, and we're looking to find some slightly larger spaces and be more creative with our scheduling so that each session can have physical seats for all attendees. Next, we also realize the difficulty of the teachers who teach vocal and general or instrumental music and how hard it is to get from one end of the Broadmoor

property to the other for sessions. We are looking to find solutions to help teachers get to all sessions in a timely fashion. Lastly, while many of us enjoyed the fancy backdrop we had for vocal concerts this year, I wanted to let everyone know that we will not be able to have that again this year. That backdrop was being used by a different conference that finished while CMEA started, and staff did not have time to fully take down their space before setting up our stage. The good news is that we will have a little more space opened up to us in the Rocky Mountain Ballroom for all concerts next year.

Speaking of concerts, now is the time to start thinking about submitting your ensemble for next year's CMEA Conference. On the vocal music council, we are looking to present a well rounded collection of choirs that represent all regions of our state. We strongly encourage middle schools, and any ensemble from a rural school district to apply. Music looks different in all corners of our state due to a variety of factors.



We also know that there are great things happening in all programs, and every student can work hard enough to earn the honor of being selected to perform on the stage at the annual CMEA Conference. So no matter the size of your school or program, we want to see all types of programs represented, and it never hurts to apply! I do recommend making sure that you use a high quality recording device to ensure we can hear good balance and all of the musical details of your performance. We use a scoring rubric very similar to the ACDA ensemble selection rubric. After the selection committee listens to each group, we fill out the rubrics, and at the end of the process we will mail these back to you. Please consider submitting one of your ensembles for consideration, and we'd love to hear your group at the next conference.

The majority of sessions we present at CMEA come from you, the amazing educators of this state. If you feel that you have a skill worth sharing, or an area of expertise, please consider submitting a session proposal for next year's conference. Maybe you know a colleague

that has an outstanding warm-up sequence or recruitment program, encourage them to apply as well. Maybe you can even tag team a session together. The more proposals we get the more variety we can present at every conference.

Applications will be open starting May 1st, and all materials must be submitted by May 25th. For more information about the process, please visit the CMEA website. Please make sure to read all of the information to make sure you have followed all of the guidelines prior to submission. Thank you for being a dedicated music educator, striving to provide quality music education to all students in this great state.

I look forward to serving all of the choral educators in this state as the chair of the vocal music council over the next two years.

All the best,
Bryan Kettlewell





Michelle Ewer
Tri-M Chair

Tri-M News

Greetings from Tri-M,

I hope you had a relaxing spring break and are refreshed for the final stretch to the end. January-March are always long dark months. I appreciate that our MEA is in January to give us something to look forward to. It has been fun running into students at various events that were at Tri-M Day. They look at me in a different context and then realize "Hey you are the Tri-M Lady?" Yep that is me! Music is a small and yet a large world. Our paths cross often in various degrees. We may be in Honor Groups together or traveling internationally together. Tri-M is a bond that brings us together.

How are your spring plans going? What projects do you have lined up for Tri-M? Perhaps a community trash clean up, or a school parking

lot garage sale to declutter your houses. After Prom help sponsored by Tri-M. Host a movie night with popcorn and soda pop. Make your presence known in your school. Spring is a great time to visit a nursing home or retirement center. Chamber ensembles or a good old-fashioned sing a long would be very welcome this time of year. Make some homemade cards and take them with you. A card that says "Have a great day or you are loved can go a long way in the life of a single senior citizen.

Several chapters have sent me reflections from Tri-M day. I welcome your thoughts from January and your hopes for next year. What would you like to see? Did you enjoy the 101st Army Jazz Band? Did you like the ability to dance and move around, or would you prefer a standalone motivational speaker?

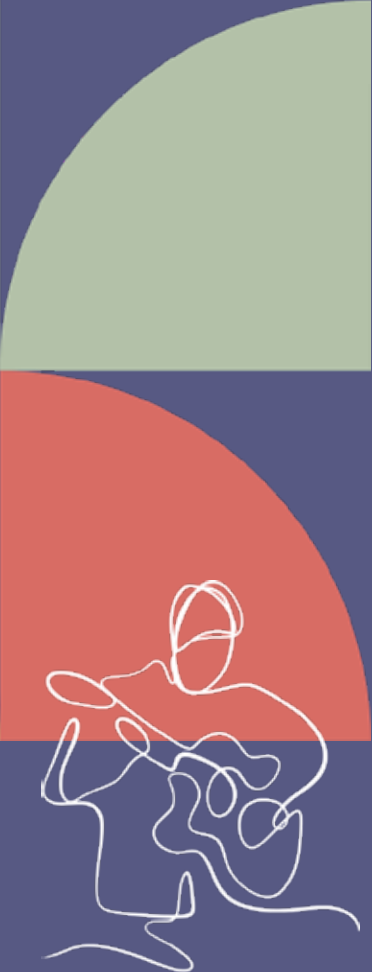


your students what they would like to see next year. Send me an email. Our planning meeting in June will be here before we know it.

Are you prepared for graduation for your seniors? They love wearing the pink chords. Check out the merchandise at the Tri-M store <https://shop.nafme.org/tri-m/> and order early. As always, I appreciate the support of all of you to make Tri-M in Colorado so amazing. We are always the talk of my quarterly Tri-M meetings. It makes me smile when other chapters speak of the 73 or 100 students they had attend Tri-M day. I am fortunate to have support from the CMEA board as well as directors like you who make it all possible. Please continue to support Tri-M and let me know how I can help you.

Sincerely,
Michelle Ewer
Colorado Tri-M Chair





Research

We have some truly exciting and impactful research taking place across Colorado and are continuing to think intentionally about how we can broaden and deepen the ways we conceptualize, connect, and ultimately apply that research to teaching practice. As part of this ongoing effort, we are exploring new structures that more meaningfully bridge the gap between research and classroom implementation. With that in mind, I would like to share a new idea we are developing for next year's conference.

As in previous years, the conference will continue to feature two dedicated research sessions—one scheduled for Friday morning and one for Saturday morning. We remain committed to inclusivity in research and welcome proposals representing a wide range of paradigms, methodologies, and approaches. At the same time, we are introducing a new emphasis within

one of these sessions that will specifically highlight research-to-practice connections. This designated research-to-practice session will focus on the practical application of research findings in K-12 classroom settings. Presenters will be asked not only to share the purpose of their research, the participants involved, and key findings, but also to clearly articulate the implications of their work for classroom practice. In particular, research should emphasize how K-12 educators can translate findings/results into actionable strategies, instructional decisions, or classroom innovations.

In addition, presenters will be encouraged to design their sessions in ways that actively engage attendees. This could include incorporating dedicated time for participants to reflect on the research presented and to discuss how the ideas and findings might be adapted or implemented within their own unique



Krissie Weimers
Research Chair



The designated research-to-practice session will focus on the practical application of research findings in K-12 classroom settings.

teaching contexts. The goal is to move beyond simply sharing research and toward fostering meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and practical takeaway experiences for educators.

The call for research proposals will still be sent in the fall as in previous years, and all submissions will continue to undergo a standard review process to ensure quality and relevance. We are excited about this shift and believe it will strengthen the connection between research and practice, ultimately supporting educators in bringing evidence-based strategies into their classrooms in thoughtful and impactful ways. We encourage you to begin thinking about your current or upcoming research through this lens and to consider submitting a proposal that highlights clear, meaningful connections between your work and K-12 classroom practice. Your insights and experi-

ences are an important part of this effort, and we look forward to the innovative ways you will help bring research to life for educators!

Krissie Weiemrs
CMEA Research Chair

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1950-1952 Mabel Henderson [*]	1996-1998 Bette Lunn [*]
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1970-1972 James Miller [*]	2016-2018 Raleigh "Butch" Eversole
1972-1974 Alex Campbell ⁺ *	2018-2019 Mark Walters [*]
1974-1976 Ralph Levy [*]	2019-2022 Kevin Beaber
1976-1978 Larry Perkins [*]	2022-2024 Cynthia Eversole
1978-1980 E'Rena Hockenberry [*]	2024-2026 Casey Cropp
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1982-1984 Herbert Goodrich	[*] deceased
1984-1987 Earl Berglund [*]	⁺ SWMENC President
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In Memoriam guidelines

As a community, CMEA publicly honors the passing of current, retired, and past educators that were members of CMEA in our quarterly Colorado Music Educators Journal. If you know of someone who has past and should be recognized you are asked to submit the following information to Margie Camp at communicationscmea@cmeaonline.org.

Following are the guidelines for these notices

- Upon the passing of current, retired, and past educators that were members of CMEA, a notice will be posted in the In Memoriam section of the CMEA Journal in the Fall, Winter, or Spring issue. These notices will include the deceased's First and Last Name, a brief description of where they were employed, positions held on the CMEA board or state assembly, the date of passing if known. You are also asked to include a link to any publicly available information about funeral or memorial arrangements.
- We invite anyone to share news of the passing of a current, retired, and or past educators that were members of CMEA, so that we can honor them. Please send such information to communicationscmea@cmeaonline.org.





Elva Jean Bolin

November 9, 1953 – January 16, 2025
Denver

Elva Jean Bolin, aged 71, died in Denver Hospice on January 16, 2025. Elva Jean Ward was born in Denver, CO on November 9, 1953. Throughout her life, Elva was dedicated to living her life as God meant. She graduated from Denver South High School and then attended The University of Denver with a full scholarship for music. Elva graduated DU in 1975 having earned a Bachelor's degree in Music Education. Elva married James Neil Bolin in 1975 and they remained married until Jim's death in 2020. Elva was a teacher in the Denver Public Schools and in the Aurora Public Schools. She was awarded Channel 7's "Everyday Hero" in 2001. She was inducted into the Colorado Music Educators Hall of Fame in 2008. Elva retired in 2019 having taught elementary school music for over 40 years.

Elva was very talented in many things besides music, including sewing, crocheting, making greeting cards and quilting. There were very few things she could not do if she set her mind to it. Elva loved Christmas; the music, decorations and her Christmas concerts.

Elva is survived by two brothers and thousands of students who were helped by learning music and having her example of honor and integrity. She will be missed by all who knew her.

Those wishing to honor Elva's life can do so by making a donation to Aurora First Presbyterian Church in her memory.



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*Dwight Nofziger, *Randall Spicer, *Mary Villa

1989-1990

*Steve Busch

1990-1991

*William F. Funke, *Ralph King

1991-1992

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Harley Brown, *J. DeForest Cline, Patsy Nix
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*Chuck Cassio, *Violette McCarthy, *Charles Meeker
*William Reeves, *Rodney Townley

1996-1997

*John McGregor, *Dorothy McKeag, Glenn Shull

1997-1998

*Patricia Guadnola, Don Shupe, Willie Hill, Jr.

1998-1999

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1999-2000

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2000-2001

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2001-2002

*Frank Montera

2002-2003

*Donald Kimble, Duane Zanotelli

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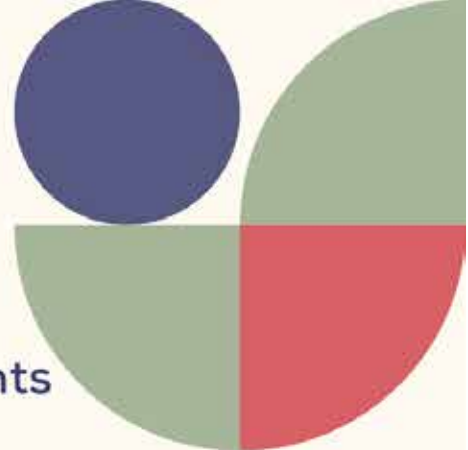
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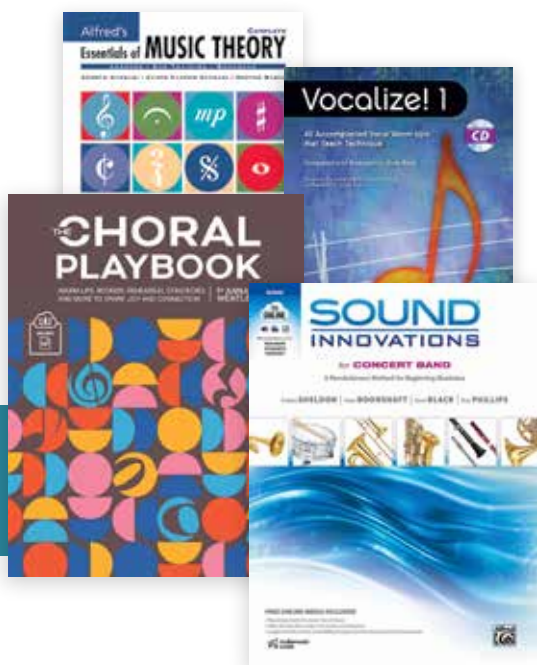
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